I. Call to order at 2:01 pm

II. Roll Call – 33 Active Senators


Senators Absent (3): Senator Kuschel, Senator Schmidt, Senator Scism

III. Recognition of Visitors

Dr. Linda Banks, AVP for Academic Affairs
Cami Cho, Research Analyst, Planning & Analysis
Heidi Vaughn, Director Galleries/Museums
Morgan Timmons, Retention Specialist, Student Support Services
Jerry Legere – Emeriti Faculty Association Representative
Saasha Reese, Talent Development Specialist, HR

IV. Approval of the Minutes [March 2, 2021]

V. Special Order of the Day

Guest Speaker:
Dr. Charlotte Simmons, Provost, VP of Academic Affairs

Dr. Simmons started off by stating she is looking forward to a more traditional semester for fall 2021. This is obviously subject to change based on the COVID situation. Dr. Simmons touched on the following:
• A task force has been convened to determine how to best use classroom technology in future semesters.
• Multiple dean searches are underway. The CFAD and CMS soon searched will conclude soon.
• Dr. Simmons and President Neuhold Ravikumar have met with 33 of 35 academic departments to hear concerns and get feedback.
• Budget deficits are an ongoing problem. The current cuts will include vacant faculty lines.
• Accreditation – HLC QI Broncho Blueprint – ramping up in fall after pilot program in FSI in fall 2020. Blueprint is designed to improve freshman retention.

In response to questions asked, Dr. Simmons stated staff cuts were not expected other than vacant positions. She also stated that they couldn’t cut faculty lines without impacting programs. Conversations are around the corner as far as looking at programs cuts. A 34-person task force has been created to evaluate everything about the divisions to be more efficient and downsize.

Dr. Simmons reiterated what a special place UCO is. Multiple philanthropic, athletic and academic accomplishments have been noted just in the past year. She thanked the senators and staff for making UCO the place that it is.

VI. Senate Executive Committee Reports

1. President DeBoard:

The Executive Committee met with Vice-President Freeman and Vice-President Feinberg on March 24.

FY22 budget planning continues. Division heads are working to identify their 6% E&G budget reduction. Final divisional budgets are due no later than April 30. The FY22 budget deficit is projected to be $15 million. That’s an improvement over prior projections based largely on an assumption of a flat appropriation from the state of Oklahoma. One-time funds will be used to fill the remaining deficit that is not covered by permanent budget reductions. The university is exploring all possible options to utilize federal COVID relief funds where appropriate. While these funds are welcome, the university must address the underlying and ongoing issues that create yearly deficits.

Application and admissions numbers have improved. They are still lower than this time last year but are now down approximately 20% instead of the 35% that they were down earlier this year.

The Executive Committee met on March 31. We discussed the general election and began planning for New Senator Orientation.

2. Vice-President Dobbs:

The Faculty Senate met on March 11th. The meeting began with guest speaker, Provost
Dr. Charlotte Simmons. Provost Simmons discussed the ongoing challenges UCO is facing particularly in the Academic Affairs division centered on the budget deficit. The Academic Affairs leadership team is meeting with each college to help the colleges create the best strategic plan in how it relates to faculty positions and departmental/college needs. The leadership team will then create a divisional strategic plan based on these conversations.

Broncho Blueprint, UCO’s freshmen signature experience, is a priority to help improve retention rates. Forensic Science piloted the program last fall and had excellent results. Every college will start offering sections in fall 2021.

Next, Stockton Duvall, UCO’s Public Affairs Specialist, gave a legislative update similar to the one he gave the Staff Senate during our March meeting. For more information or if you have questions, please contact Stockton Duvall at sduvall5@uco.edu.

The next Faculty Senate meeting is on Thursday, April 8 at 2pm. Visit their website to find a Faculty Senator to ask for the link to the meeting.

3. Secretary/Treasurer Kaiser: No report

4. Webmaster/Historian Hunter: No report

5. Parliamentarian Delaney:

Elections are complete and tabulations are underway. Those will be released on Friday of this week.

VII. University-Wide Committee/Representation Reports

1. University Planning Council President DeBoard

UPC met on March 22. I was unable to attend but received an update from another attendee. The bulk of the discussion centered on the FY22 budget.

2. Committee on Diversity Senator Wimmer

The Committee on Diversity met on Wednesday, March 10th, and we received reports from several sub-committees that have been formed over the past year. The sub-committee for the Inclusive Community Strategic Plan is currently aligning the plan to UCO’s history and direction. The Curriculum Sub-Committee is moving forward with planning and is working on logistics in reviewing the curriculum. The Inclusive Community Response Team reported zero incidents this semester, but will continue to meet and discuss emerging practices. The Continuous Cultural Competence Program, also known as 3CP, has rolled out successfully and will continue to meet and form an advisory board to assist in approving activities that can be counted for credit. Recently, there has been a significant demand to have documents translated. In response, the Committee on Diversity will be forming a new sub-committee to help coordinate
translation services across campus for departments and units who need documents translated. There was no new business.

3. Inclusive Community Update Senator Hunter
No Report

VIII. Senate Standing Committee Reports and Membership

1. Constitution, Parliamentary Procedure, and Elections Committee
Chair: Senator Delaney
Vice Chair: 
Members: Senators Gamagedara and Harrel

The committee is currently working on creating a Staff Senate Parliamentarian manual.

2. Compensation Committee
Chair: Senator Platt
Vice Chair: Senator Scism
Members: Senators Schwab, Herd, Edwards-Johnson, Selanders, Huff, Rogers, and Jackson

The committee reviewed and made edits to the Child Study Center Expansion Committee proposal. The committee then voted and passed the proposal to be presented at the general Staff Senate meeting in April.

3. Policy and Staff Welfare Committee
Chair: Senator Ratterman
Vice Chair: 

On March 10, the Policy & Staff Welfare Committee met to finalize the resolution pertaining to conflict resolution resources available to staff at UCO. The final draft was approved and voted on by the committee for submission to be presented at the next Senate meeting. The next meeting is April 14, 2021.

4. Stakeholder Relations and Involvement Committee
Chair: Senator Tabak
Vice Chair: Senator Hendricks
Members: Senators Romano, Richardson, Kuschel, Stephens, and K. Smith

The Stakeholder Relations and Involvement Committee met on March 16. Staff morale and welfare continues to be a concern. The Committee is working on a “thank you” card campaign to support staff morale.
IX. Unfinished Business

X. New Business

SSP 2020/2021-001: Child Study Center Expansion Committee – Senator Platt, as Chair of the Compensation Committee, introduced the proposal. The proposal will be debated and voted on at the next general meeting.

SSR 2020/2021-004: Campus Employee Conflict Resolution Resources – Senator Ratterman, Chair of the Policy and Staff Welfare Committee, introduced the resolution. The resolution will be debated and voted on at the next general meeting.

SSR 2020/2021-005: Resolution Supporting UCO’s AAPI Community – Senator Dobbs, VP of the Executive Committee, introduced the resolution. Senator Edwards-Johnson made a motion to accelerate the process to allow for debate and vote on the resolution today. Senator Platt seconded the motion. The motion was debated. The motion to accelerate the process passed. Debate on the resolution was opened by Senator Dobbs. A vote was held, and Resolution SSR 2020/2021-005 passed.

XI. Announcements for the Good of the Order

Senator DeBoard – Encouraged all to continue referencing the UCO COVID web page for future vaccination clinics.

Senator Hunter – Invited all to attend the Jackson College of Graduate Studies webinar series “Dialogue with the Dean” April 13 @ 2PM – Tips and Strategies for Graduate Admissions at UCO.

Senator Smith – OBI Blood drives 4/8 and 4/14, NUC Heritage Room, 10AM to 3PM.

Senator DeBoard – A Qualtrics survey will be sent requesting feedback on shared governance – what does it mean to you as staff members and staff senators. Participation in encouraged.

Senior Tabak – AAPI diversity and inclusions event today at 3PM. Come show your support.

XII. Adjournment

President DeBoard adjourned the meeting at 2:48 pm.